

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 OPR-02 SAJ-01 NIC-01 CPR-02

ACDA-19 OMB-01 SY-10 A-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 /167 W

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R 231032Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6384

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USNATO 1869

DIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 2658

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS UR

SUBJ: MFA NOTE REDUCING TRAVEL CONTROLS

REF: A) MOSCOW 2362 (NOTAL); B) MOSCOW 2342 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET CHANGES IN TRAVEL REGULATIONS ARE MODEST BUT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THE SOVIET IMAGE ABROAD WAS PROBABLY A CONSIDERATION, AND PAST WESTERN RETALIATIONS AGAINST SOVIET RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES HERE MAY HAVE HELPED. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS FIRST SUGGESTING TO SOVIETS A MORE SWEEPING RELAXATION, THEN FALLING BACK TO EXACT RECIPROCATATION FOR SOVIET IMPROVEMENTS. WE SHOULD NOT ABET THE SOVIETS AT CSCE OR ELSEWHERE IN EXAGGERATING THE EXTENT OF THEIR RELAXATION. THESE QUESTIONS MIGHT USEFULLY BE DISCUSSED AT NATO. END SUMMARY.

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2. DETAILS OF SOVIET PROPOSAL. EMBASSY TRAVEL

OFFICER CALLED ON MFA PROTOCOL OFFICER SEMENOV AND ASSISTANT TO CHIEF OF SECTION STEPANOV FEB 21 AND RECEIVED FOLLOWING CLARIFICATIONS OF MFA'S NOTE OF FEB 18:

A. MOSCOW OBLAST' LIBERALIZATION MEANS IN EFFECT ONLY THAT NOTE-FREE TRAVEL IS NOW ALLOWED TO FOLLOWING TOWNS OF TOURISTIC ATTRACTIONS: ZAGORSK (TRAVEL BY TRAIN NOW ALLOWED), ZVENIGOROD, ISTRA, KLIN, SOLNECHNOGORSK, ABRAMTSEVO. OPEN HIGHWAYS THROUGH CLOSED PORTIONS OF MOSCOW OBLAST' REMAIN OPEN ONLY RPT ONLY FOR TRANSIT TO OPEN DESTINATION. OTHER DRIVING, SUCH AS FOR PURPOSE OF PICNICKING, IS NOT ALLOWED.

B. PERSONNEL AFFECTED BY LIBERALIZATION ARE PRECISELY AS STATED IN NOTE ONLY, EXCEPT THAT FAMILY MEMBERS ARE IN ALL CASES INCLUDED. THUS, FOR EXAMPLE, VISITING DIPLOMATS FROM DEPARTMENT OR OTHER POSTS OR EVEN LENINGRAD WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY CHANGES. SOVIET OFFICIALS DID INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS ASPECT WAS UNDER STUDY.

C. ON "TEMPORARY" BASIS THE FOLLOWING FOUR OBLASTS IN SOVIET FAR EAST WILL BE CLOSED TO VISITING CHIEFS OF MISSION AS WELL AS OTHER DIPLOMATS: AMUR, CHITA, EAST KAZAKHSTAN, AND JEWISH AUTONOMOUS (BIROBIDZHAN).

D. MFA WILL ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH UP-TO-DATE MAP OR DESCRIPTION OF INTOURIST HIGHWAY NETWORK FOR PURPOSE OF IDENTIFYING THOSE CITIES TO

WHICH 24-HOUR NOTIFICATION WILL APPLY. ON BASIS 1971 MAP, EMBASSY HAS TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED FOLLOWING CITIES AS THOSE TO WHICH 24-HOUR REQUIREMENT WILL APPLY: MOSCOW, VLADIMIR-SUZDAL', YAROSLAVL, KALININ, NOVGOROD, LENINGRAD, VYBORG, TALLINN, SMOLENSK, MINSK, BREST, TULA, OREL, KIEV, ZHITOMIR, L'VOV, UZHGOROD, CHERNOVTSY, KISHINEV, ODESSA, POLTAVA, CONFIDENTIAL

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KHAR'KOV, ROSTOV-NA-DONU, SIMFEROPOL', KRASNODAR, SUKHUMI, YEREVAN, TBILISI, ORDZHONIKIDZE.

E. THERE IS NO PRESENT THOUGHT OF EXTENDING THESE CHANGES TO BUSINESSMEN, JOURNALISTS, OR CLERGY. SEMENOV CONCEDED THAT HIS JOB OF ADMINISTERING TRAVEL CONTROLS WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT WITH RESULTING GREATER DIFFERENTIATION IN RULES APPLYING TO DIFFER-

ENT CATEGORIES OF FOREIGNERS.

3. SIGNIFICANCE. ALTHOUGH THE ACTUAL CHANGES WHICH FLOW FROM THE MFA NOTE ARE DISAPPOINTINGLY LIMITED, NEVERTHELESS THEY REPRESENT THE FIRST REAL SOVIET MOVEMENT ON THIS LONG-VEXED QUESTION IN EIGHT YEARS. MOST OF THE SOVIET TRAVEL CONTROL SYSTEM, OF COURSE, REMAINS IN FORCE, WITH THE FORMALLY CLOSED AREAS NOT DIMINISHED BUT "TEMPORARILY" (WHATEVER THAT WILL TURN OUT TO MEAN) INCREASED BY 900,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS, AND THE UNWRITTEN TRAVEL CONTROLS (SUCH AS GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS, UBIQUITOUS HIGHWAY MILITIA) REMAIN IN PLACE AND EFFECTIVE.

4. SOVIET MOTIVATIONS. AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, SOME ELEMENTS OF THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY SEEM TO HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE ANACHRONISTIC NATURE OF TRAVEL CONTROLS. THEIR PERCEPTIONS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN SHARPENED BY RECIPROCAL AND RETALIATORY ACTIONS BY THE U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES. IN A BROADER SENSE, SOME QUARTERS AT LEAST SEEM TO HAVE DEVELOPED AN APPRECIATION OF THE NEED TO SHOW TO THE WORLD SOME ATTRIBUTES OF AN OPEN SOCIETY, AND THE TIMING OF THE SOVIET MOVE PROBABLY WAS AFFECTED IN PART BY CSCE. THIS WAS THE CONTEXT OF EARLIER RUMORS ABOUT AN IMPENDING SWEEPING LIBERALIZATION OF TRAVEL CONTROLS (MOSCOW 1607). AND WE NOTE THAT KOVALEV CITED MOSCOW'S ACTIONS IN TALKING WITH AMBASSADOR SHERER IN GENEVA (GENEVA 1097). BUT EVEN THE SOVIETS SEEM TO RECOGNIZE THAT AFETER ALL THE LABOR PAINS, THEY HAVE BROUGHT FORTH A MOUSE:
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THE MFA MADE NO EFFORT TO PROVIDE--MUCH LESS INITIATE--INFORMATION TO WESTERN NEWSMEN, THUS ASSURING THAT NEWS STORIES WOULD BE BASED ON THE CAUTIOUS ANALYSES OF WESTERN DIPLOMATS IN MOSCOW. IN ANY CASE, WE BELIEVE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD SOVIET ACTIONS, AT CSCE AND ELSEWHERE, SHOULD BE TO WELCOME IT AS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION BUT TO POINT OUT THE EXTREMELY LIMITED NATURE OF WHAT THE SOVIETS HAVE ACTUALLY DONE. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOVIET MOVE, AS WELL AS THE TACTICS DISCUSSED IN PARAS 5 AND 6, AT NATO.

5. OVERALL U.S TACTICS. KORNIYENKO'S REMARKS ABOUT RECIPROCITY, TOGETHER WITH IMPRESSION WE

HAVE RECEIVED FROM TRAVEL SECTION IN MFA PROTOCOL
DEPARTMENT THAT THERE WILL BE FURTHER CLARIFICA-
TIONS BETWEEN NOW AND APRIL 5, LEAD EMBASSY TO
SUGGEST THAT BEFORE RESPONDING IN KIND TO THE
SOVIET PROPOSAL WE SHOULD MAKE AN EFFORT TO ELICIT
MORE WIDE-RANGING RELAXATION. THEREFORE WE
RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZE AMBASSADOR
TO RAISE MATTER AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL. SUCH AN
APPROACH COULD DESCRIBE THE SOVIET ACTION AS A
WELCOME BUT RATHER MODEST STEP CONSIDERING THE
PRESENT STATE OF INTERNATIONAL RELAXATION AND,
NOTING SOVIET REQUEST FOR RECIPROCATATION, STATE

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SAJ-01 NIC-01 OPR-02 OMB-01 SY-10

A-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 DRC-01

CPR-02 ACDA-19 EB-11 TRSE-00 /167 W

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R 231032Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6385

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

USNATO 1870

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 2658

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

THAT U.S. IS PREPARED RECIPROCALLY TO ABOLISH ALL
TRAVEL CONTROLS OR AT LEAST TO RECIPROCATATE AT ANY OF
THE OTHER FOLLOWING LEVELS, SOME OF WHICH WOULD
UNDOUBTEDLY BE MUCH MORE SUCCESSFUL THAT FEB 18
ACTION IN DEMONSTRATING TO WORLD PUBLIC OPINION THAT DETENTE
IS MAKING REAL HEADWAY:

A. ELIMINATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF TRAVEL BY ALL FOREIGNERS TO ALL OPEN AREAS.

B. THE SAME AS A BUT LIMITED IN AREA, FOR EXAMPLE TO THE EUROPEAN PART OF THE USSR AND AN EQUIVALENT AREA OF THE U.S.

C. OPEN UP TO NOTE-FREE TRAVEL WIDE AREAS AROUND NATIONAL CAPITALS.

D. EXTEND TO ALL FOREIGNERS (JOURNALISTS, BUSINESSMEN, TOURISTS) THE MEASURES DESCRIBED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SOVIET NOTE OF FEB 18.

6. ASSUMING, AS EMBASSY DOES, THAT SOVIETS WILL

NOT AT THIS POINT BE PREPARED TO GO BEYOND THE FEB 18 NOTE, WE OFFER FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING U.S. RECIPROCATION:

A. CHIEF OF MISSION'S NOTE-FREE TRAVEL IN OPEN AREAS. THIS IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THE CHANGES, SINCE IT WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE AMBASSADOR TO VISIT SOME PLACES, PARTICULARLY NEAR MOSCOW, WHICH UNTIL NOW HAVE BEEN INDEFINITELY CLOSED FOR "TEMPORARY" REASONS. WE NOTE THAT SOVIET LANGUAGE DOES NOT SPECIFY WHO MAY BE COUNTED AS CHAUFFEUR OR TRANSLATOR, AND THEREFORE, UNLESS SOVIETS TELL US OTHERWISE, WE PLAN TO ASSUME THAT ANY EMBASSY OFFICER IS FREE TO SERVE IN EITHER CAPACITY (PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THAT HE CAN, RESPECTIVELY, DRIVE A CAR OR SPEAK RUSSIAN). DIRECT RECIPROCITY FOR SOVIET AMBASSADOR PLUS FAMILY, CHAUFFEUR, AND TRANSLATOR, WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

B. MOSCOW OBLAST' LIBERALIZATION. WHAT IS INVOLVED IS ONLY SIX NEARBY TOWNS, EACH A STANDARD TOURIST ATTRACTION TO WHICH EMBASSY PERSONNEL DO FREQUENTLY TRAVEL, ESPECIALLY ON WEEKENDS. NOTE-FREE TRAVEL WILL BE OF REAL BENEFIT IN THESE CASES. SINCE WE HAVE LINKED ZAGORSK AND PIONEER POINT TRAVEL IN THE PAST, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT AS OF APRIL 5 SOVIET EMBASSY BE ALLOWED NOTE-FREE TRAVEL TO PIONEER POINT. WE RECOMMEND THAT FIVE OTHER MARYLAND OR VIRGINIA TOWNS ALSO BE OPENED TO NOTE-FREE TRAVEL, BUT DEPARTMENT IS IN BEST POSITION TO CHOOSE WHICH ONES. IN VIEW OF PARA 2.A ABOVE, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT RESTRICTION ON MODE OF TRAVEL TO

REHOBOTH (STATE A-1151) BE LIFTED AS OF APRIL 5.

C. TWENTY-FOUR HOUR REQUIREMENT FOR TOWNS ON
INTOURIST AUTOMOBILE ROUTES. THIS REDUCES NOTIFI-
CATION TIME FOR MOST OF CITIES TO WHICH EMBASSY
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TRAVELS (BY WHATEVER TRAVEL MODE) AND WILL PRIMARILY
ASSIST US BY REDUCING NUMBER OF EXCEPTIONS TO 48-HOUR
RULE WE NEED TO ASK FOR. APPROPRIATE RECIPROCITY
WOULD BE TO PROVIDE LIST OF U.S. CITIES ROUGHLY
EQUIVALENT TO LIST IN PARA 2.D, OR ALTERNATIVELY
TO APPLY THE RULE TO CITIES LOCATED ON THE INTER-
STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM, FOR EXAMPLE, EAST OF THE
MISSISSIPPI AND NORTH OF THE MASON-DIXON LINE.
IN EITHER CASE SAN FRANCISCO AND NEW YORK SHOULD
BE INCLUDED. SOVIETS WILL THUS BE ATTAINING THEIR
OBJECTIVE ON ONE-DAY TRAVEL TO NEW YORK WITHOUT
MEETING OUR DESIRE TO ASSURE AUTOMATICITY OF
NEW YORK AND LENINGRAD TRAVEL. WE WOULD SUGGEST
THAT THIS BE POINTED OUT ORALLY AT THE TIME OF
OUR REPLY, WITH A WARNING THAT FUTURE TURNDOWNS
FOR LENINGRAD TRAVEL WILL BE RECIPROCATED BY
APPROPRIATE NEW YORK TURNDOWNS.

D. WITH REGARD TO ORALLY COMMUNICATED
TEMPORARY CLOSING OF FOUR FAR EAST OBLASTS, EMBASSY
RECOMMENDS SIMILAR ACTION FOR AN EQUIVALENT PER-
CENTAGE AREA, FOR EXAMPLE CERTAIN AREAS ALONG
THE CANADIAN BORDER AND PERHAPS THE STATE OF
FLORIDA. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO TURN DOWN ALL
BUT THE MOST COMPELLING REQUESTS FOR EXCEPTIONS
FOR TRAVEL TO THESE AREAS.

E. WE RECOMMEND THAT CATEGORIES OF PERSONNEL
TO WHOM U.S. RECIPROCAL LIBERALIZATIONS APPLY BE
KEPT CONSONANT WITH SOVIET PRACTICE PER PARA 2.B.
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